

Florida Folk Dancer

A Newsletter of the Florida Folk Dance Council, Inc.

July-August 2011

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Pat Pieratte, Terry Abrahams, Ann Robinson, and Betty Nehemias at Flagler Beach.

See [Fun at Flagler Fling](#).

Photo by Jack Seltzer

Judy Merkt running the program at the Sarasota Summer Stomp. See [Sarasota Grapeviners](#).

Photo by Terry Abrahams

Prez Sez

Summer is here, and boy do we know it! Thank God we dance inside with a/c! The Flagler Fling (see [Fun at Flagler Fling](#)) and the Sarasota Summer Stomp (see [Sarasota Grapeviners](#)) have livened up the season for a bunch of us. But enough about mundane things – on to **FFDC Presidents' Weekend 2012!** (It was a lot easier to say “camp”, but I’m training myself). Here’s the announcement you’ve all been waiting for!

Teachers: **Yuliyán Yardonov** – teaching **Bulgarian**. Yuli is the latest, greatest, has been at all the big camps, and I’m sure will not fail to amuse and amaze us! In a future issue, we’ll include his bio so that you can see what a treat you’re in for.

To be totally different from Bulgarian, we’ve invited **Andy Taylor-Blenis** to do a combo of **Portuguese** and **Scottish**. Andy is the daughter of Marianne Taylor, whom we all know as the mother of folk dance. I have never been lucky enough to dance with Andy, but I understand from those who have danced with her that she is an equal ball of fire, fun, and good! I hear she also yodels.

Because I hit the big bingo with Portuguese with Kay Afonso and her Portuguese husband, Tony, we have already solved the problem of snacks on Portuguese night – which certainly gives me some relief. But over the summer, you are welcome to think about Bulgarian and/or Scottish food that you might want to do for the other evenings. Don’t hesitate to come forth without my begging.

So – we will have our same hotel as 2011 (Holiday Inn Main Gate East, in Kissimmee, FL,) sans interference in our eating area; the floor has been ordered, sans stickiness; the teachers are hired. All of which gives me the summer to not think about camp! I’m off to India with Jodi August 2nd and back the 24th. I know Pat and Bobby are joining Ruthy Slann in Israel (probably as we speak – or is it read?), Caroline and Gary are everywhere.



I love reading about everyone’s trips and look forward to details. Folk dancers are really interesting people aren’t we! I know some groups are on a summer hiatus, but have a great summer – and dance somewhere!

– Terry

Fun at Flagler Fling

by Terry Abrahams

I'm not sure it could get any better. Between dancing, eating and friendship, all was perfect. We have the Spring Fling, the Fall Fling, and now the third annual Flagler Fling. A bunch of us who were there think we should make it an official part of the FFDC calendar. Over 40 people from Orlando, Tampa, Ocala, Gainesville and Tallahassee joined the locals at the Ocean Marina clubhouse to dance.



Some of the gang; standing: Terry Abrahams, Manuel Mora-Vals, Palmira Mora-Vals, Ann Robinson, Linda Seltzer, Ursula Tison, Pat Pieratte, Betty Nehemias, Ruth Ann Fay, Eva Bach, Bill Byars, Donna Young, Kay Afonso, Bonnie Olson, Mary Jean Linn, Pat Henderson, Arleen Kaufmann; in front: Jack Seltzer, Tina Fagan, Minnie Berkowitz, Mary Lange (semi-standing), Lynda Fagan, Tony Afonso, Bobby Quibodeaux, Szuzi Horvath

Thanks to Betty Nehemias for having the smarts to live at that place and for making the arrangements for us to dance (at no charge) at the clubhouse. The Flagler gang dances there every week, lucky dogs! Let me describe the place. The Ocean Marina is across the street from the ocean, the clubhouse has a large wood floor which overlooks a lovely swimming pool and bay and has many windows, some marvelously comfortable couches and chairs for resting time, a perfect kitchen, and lots of parking. Jan Lathi ran a great program and we danced from noon to 7 pm, almost without stopping.

Tony and Kay invited us to their home after dancing, and Made-By-Tony wine was served and his garden observed. Conversation included traveling, which we've all done extensively, so stories abounded.

But wait – there's more! Sunday morning, ten of us met at the beach and walked for an hour, enjoying the view and working out a few sore muscles. Some even saw some dolphins and went in the water. Following that, we gathered at Maggie's European Restaurant, joined by three more dancers, and we enjoyed absolutely great food – again! We have voted to make Maggie's a tradition along with all the other good stuff.

That weekend happened just two days before Jan left to visit her kids and grandkids in California, but she still hosted four of us, served a great breakfast, and we swam there before the walk on the beach. Other out-of-towners were hosted by Betty and Kay and Tony and all had a great time.

If you didn't want to drive that far, think again for next year, or line up a car pool – it was marvelous! Then again, it's nice to have activities in different parts of the state, so we can all get to one or another.

Flagler Fling Fun – Fabulous!



Dancers at Flagler Fling: behind line, at left Lynda Fagan, in line: Jan Lathi, Bobby Quibodeaux, Betty Nehemias, Linda Seltzer, Ann Robinson, Palmira Mora-Vals, Manuel Mora-Vals, Pat Henderson, Donna Young, Arleen Kaufmann, Ruth Ann Fay, Terry Abrahams, Bonnie Olson

Photo by Jack Seltzer

NFO Conference and Festival of Nations

by Linda Nicoli

The National Folk Organization (NFO) held its 2011 Annual Conference May 5-8 in St. Paul, Minnesota, coinciding with the Festival of Nations. Linda Nicoli and her husband Rich dance in Sarasota.

When I saw the picture of the Cathedral of St. Paul in the National Folk Organization newsletter, they had me. I walked by that cathedral every day on my way to high school. They had scheduled the annual conference of the National Folk Organization for my hometown, St. Paul, Minnesota. Even better, it was to be held in conjunction with the Festival of Nations. I had grown up dancing at the Festival, starting at age five with my parents' group and continuing until we moved to Florida in the summer of 2004. Rich and I had to be there. We joined the NFO, registered for the conference and bought the tickets.



Photos by Rich Nicoli



Views from the conference hotel: top: view of St. Paul with Cathedral of St. Paul at left; above: the Mississippi River.

We had no idea what the conference would be like. We expected hundreds of people – turns out only 31 lovers of folk dance and lore signed up. But what dynamic people they were! One started and runs the Stockton Folk Dance Camp; there were directors of performing groups; and people who have taught folk dance for 30 years.

Orlando's own Pat Henderson and Bobby Quibodeaux were there, and people who support people trying to preserve folk traditions from all over the world by education, insurance and networking.

Highlights for us were the workshops in distance learning through technology and the banquet honoring two Minnesota folk dance leaders, Don LaCourse and Eva Kish. The banquet was held on the 22nd floor of the Crowne Plaza Hotel, overlooking my beloved Cathedral and the Mississippi River, swollen with spring. We also spent a wonderful evening at Tapestry Folk Dance Center, Minneapolis' equivalent of Sarasota's Grapeviners, learning dances that I will teach in Sarasota in July.



Linda's sister, Louise Wessinger, and the St. Paul Czech & Slovak Folk Dancers performing at the Festival of Nations. Her kroje (folk dress) is Moravian

The Festival of Nations was in its 79th year. It is really an international smorgasbord of cultural exhibits (54 nations), folk art demonstrations (32), a bazaar where items from 52 different countries are offered for sale, 37 ethnic cafes and 3 stages where dancers, musicians and entertainers from 64 different nations perform. The sounds, smells, and pre-performance jitters were just as I remembered from my years as a member of the St. Paul Czech & Slovak Folk Dancers. This time, I was in the audience, watching and applauding my sister and her children, teen and adult groups perform.

Rich and I were joined by our son, his wife and six-month-old daughter and our African family friends from Kenya who had "adopted" us more than 30 years ago. They recently immigrated to Minnesota after winning green cards in the lottery. It was an exciting combination of nostalgia, pride and inspiration that I hope to repeat in the near future.

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Sarasota Grapeviners

by Judy Merkt

Hot, humid, and wet – remind anyone of any place they know? Yes, it's summer in Florida. But fortunately, we have a nice air-conditioned home for our weekly dance sessions and dancing is what we are doing!

Our **2nd Annual Summer Stomp** was July 6 and we had a very nice crowd of 26 folks. We did exhaust ourselves, but it's a good kind of exhaustion. Most of our regular summer crowd was there as well as Terry Abrahams and Ursula Tison from Tampa, Vicki Kulifay from Dunedin, and Caroline and Gary Lanker from Frostproof. We also had a walk-in couple stop by and, although they mostly watched, they definitely enjoyed themselves. I think we will see them again. That would be wonderful – we love to introduce new folks to our passion.



At left: Cate Mamber, Eva Stunkel, Delores Lustig, Caroline Lanker; above: Kay Zabetakis, Ursula Tison, Judy Merkt, Demetrius Babiak, Terry Abrahams, Faith Kibler.

Photos by Varda Ruskin



*Photo by
Mike
Bossert*

Caroline Lanker, Eva Stunkel, Vicki deRosset, Cate Mamber, Kay Hislop, Judy Merkt (in front), Kay Zabetakis, Rich Nicoli, Linda Nicoli, Renee Tennis, Thekla Kahn, Barbara Zigras, Varda Ruskin, Marion Hoercher, Sergio Zigras, Vicki Kulifay, Delores Lustig, Beverly Mann, Gary Lanker (in the back), Terry Abrahams, Ursula Tison, D.A. Tyler, Janina Kozma.

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Scandia Camp Mendocino

by Caroline Lanker

Gary and I spent June 11 – 17 at Scandia Camp Mendocino in Mendocino Woodlands State Park, California. As usual, the camp featured pairs of dance teachers from Sweden and Norway plus music and singing classes. The Swedish dance teachers taught *Slangpolska*, a dance for either couples or trios. It is a fun dance, and does not have the pivoting turns that make most Scandinavian couple dances difficult to learn. I think the *Slangpolska* might be attractive to Florida folk dancers.



Swedish violin teacher, Kristina Samuelsson (left), with Swedish dance teachers, Karin Hansen and Ellge Jakobsson performing *Slangposka* for three. Swedish violin teacher Christer Samuelsson is playing in the background.

Of course, Judith Baizan and Roo Lester (who taught at Florida Camp 2009) were there. Roo is one of the directors of the camp. Plus, we reconnected with a number of other dancers we have met before. This year the camp added classes in Scandinavian Dance Fundamentals, taught by Roo and greatly appreciated by a number of new dancers there.



Roo Lester and Judith Baizan in costume



Young musicians: Ben Teitelbaum, playing the Swedish nyckelharpa, and Norwegian violinist Marie Forr Klåpbakken

Another nice feature of this year's camp was the number of younger people there. The Swedish dance and fiddle teachers (two married couples) brought four of their children with them. The three sons of the fiddle teachers played fiddles, too. There were also two young (twenty-something, I think) musicians. The quality of all the musicians was very fine. We had wonderful live music for everything, even our morning warm-ups!



Musicians leading the procession into the dining hall for the banquet

Photos by Caroline Lanker

Thursday evening, campers and teachers dressed up in their finest Scandinavian costumes for a cocktail party, a banquet and a show put on by the teachers and music students. There were dance parties every evening, of course, and a fun swing dance party before dinner one afternoon.

The accommodations at the camp are Spartan (no electricity or plumbing in the cabins) and the nights are cold on the northern California coast. Every night I wondered why I had subjected myself to the rigors of the camp, like going out in the cold to the wash house, and every day I remembered why I was there. At least, we were blessed with mostly sunny days.

Orlando International Folk Dance Club

by Pat Henderson

So much has happened since the last newsletter. Let me start by reporting the traveling in May and June. First, Phyllis Dammer went to Kansas City for her 60th high school reunion. Ann Robinson went to Milwaukee for her granddaughter's high school graduation. Then Bobby and I traveled to Minneapolis/St. Paul for the NFO Conference. (See [NFO Conference](#).) Afterward, we drove to the Black Hills with Mt. Rushmore of South Dakota and then on to North Dakota.

Just before leaving, we finished building the bathroom for folk dancers. It was used the first time the night before we left. Nicki Wise was the lucky one to test our "upflush" toilet. When we returned, we had some finishing and painting to do. On June 1, the dancers surprised Bobby and me with a "Bathroom Shower". The dance room was decorated, people brought food, and presents for the bathroom were abundant. We received toilet paper, soaps, air fresheners and art work. The green lizard made by Ann Robinson matched the green decor of the bathroom perfectly. Betty Nehemias' grandson painted a scene of dancers in the spring for us. Phyllis Dammer read a poem about the bathroom which is reprinted here. Bobby and I are so thankful for such a fun and thoughtful group!



The bathroom shower: Bobby Quibodeaux, Pat Henderson, and Phyllis Dammer

Photo by Kelly Fagan

That same night was Juanita Schockey's birthday. I arranged to have a surprise party for her, not knowing that the group was planning the surprise bathroom shower. So, we did both and it was an enchanting night all around.



Juanita Schockey with her birthday cake

Photo by Pat Henderson

On June 25, many of us attended the Flagler Fling and had a ball. (See [Fun at Flagler Fling](#).) I love the beach and dancing with a view of the bay is fantastic.

Remember that Orlando does not dance in July or August. See everyone the first Wednesday in September!

Bathroom Shower

by Phyllis Dammer

Our parties are held for many special reasons
Birthdays, holidays - any of the seasons.

We love to dance and have a good time
And any old reason will do just fine.

This shower is held as a big thank you
For providing us with a new venue.

No longer do we have to climb
Lots of stairs, one at a time.

Folks, your talents and hospitality are great
The new facility is really first rate.

So, for the new bathroom, a great big thank you;
And may all who join us enjoy it too.

Performance by Lynda Fagan

by Kelly Fagan

I am so proud to report my sister, Lynda, recently played Lady Thiang in "The King and I" for Ocala Civic Theatre.

This is her first foray into musical theatre as an adult and voila, she was just honored as the season's "Best Supporting Actress in a Musical".

She was brilliant.

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From the Editor

Gary and I have been combating the summer doldrums by travelling and dancing as much as possible. On May 22, we hosted one of our occasional dance parties at our house. The stars must have been aligned just right, because 21 people attended (tying our record), including dancers from Sarasota, Orlando, Melbourne and Tampa, local people, including one small child, and Gary and me. We danced from about 2 PM to 9 PM with time out for a potluck supper. It happened that all of the FFDC officers were there, so we held an impromptu officers' meeting and discussed teachers for Presidents' Weekend 2012. See Terry's [Prez Sez](#) for the eventual results. (If you didn't receive an invitation but might want to attend a future party, please let me know. We generally invite people who are within about two hours drive, but all dancers and their guests are welcome.)

On May 28, Gary and I attended one day of the Florida State Square and Round Dance Convention in Lakeland. The event included multiple dance halls for square and round dancing at various levels of difficulty, with many different square dance callers and round dance cuers. The culmination of the evening found at least a hundred dancers in squares in the largest hall, with callers doing "singing calls" in duets. They called easy dances that everyone could do, but made it very entertaining.

Soon after that, we left for the west coast. After flying to Oregon, we quickly packed up the camping gear and warm clothes we keep out there and headed south to spend six days at Scandia Camp (see [Scandia Camp Mendocino](#)).

The week after Scandia Camp we were at a time-share condo near San Diego, along with Gary's daughter and her family. We attended a Scandinavian dance party and an international dance group during that week. There were five of us at the Scandinavian dance party who had been at Scandia Camp the week before. One of the nice things about that Scandi group is that they have a custom of changing partners after every dance and including everyone. And the night we were there, the male dancers outnumbered the women by one!

We were sorry to miss the Flagler Fling while we were in California. It seems to have been a resounding success! (See [Fun at Flagler Fling](#).)



Scandinavian Dance Party in San Diego

Photo by Caroline Lanker

We arrived back in Florida just in time to dance in Orlando on June 29 – the last international dance night there before their summer hiatus – and say "Bon voyage" to Pat and Bobby, who were getting ready for their trip to Israel. Of course, we expect an article for the newsletter when they return.

On July 6, we drove to Sarasota to dance at the Sarasota Summer Stomp – lots of fun. (See [Sarasota Grapeviners](#).)

– CL

Recipe from Gainesville

Gainesville IFD held its monthly party night on June 17. Jack Seltzer reported the food and wine was outstanding and a good time was had by all. He even passed along a recipe for one of the dishes – Hot Crab Dip by Jualene Lewis.

Hot Crab Dip

Ingredients:

- 1 pound jumbo lump crab meat, free of shells
- 1 cup grated pepper jack cheese
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup mayonnaise
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup grated Parmesan Cheese
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup green onions minced
- 5 or 6 roasted garlic cloves or 2 cloves minced
- 3 tablespoons Worcestershire sauce
- 2 tablespoons fresh lemon or lime juice
- 1 teaspoon hot pepper sauce (Optional - I do not use this. It makes it too hot.)
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon dry mustard
- Salt and pepper to taste

Directions:

Preheat oven to 325 degrees F. Combine all of the ingredients in a casserole and gently stir until thoroughly mixed. Bake for 40 minutes. Serve hot with crackers or toast points.

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South Brevard International Dancers

by Jean Murray

Welcome, Brevard's new dancers! It started with a group wanting to learn Gathering Peascods, a colonial dance, to perform at a wedding. We taught them that and, between John Daly and David Davia, came up with a few other colonial dances. Then, they stuck around and we have been running a beginner's class! We have tortured them with *Povos*, *Mayim*, *Jefferson's Reel* (another colonial dance), *Champs-Élysées*, *Menim Balam*, *Alunelul*, *Ali Pasa*, and anything else we could think of to keep them moving.

Our other big news is that the Orlando International Folk Dance Club, which is in their summer hiatus, will be visiting us on Friday, August 5. All folk dancers are invited to come. We will dance at the regular time and place: 7 to 10 pm at the Melbourne Village Community House at 6200 Hall Road. Directions are on the FFDC web site, www.folkdance.org, in the "Places to Dance in Florida" section. Overnight hospitality is available for out-of-town guests. Contact: Jean Murray, 321-506-7918, trialgenie@cfl.rr.com.

Melbourne would like to combine the August 5th dance with a warm welcome to our new dancers. We'll mix in beginner dances with your requests. Bring your favorite beginner dance to teach and dance. Meeting the FFDC is always intimidating for new dancers; I know it was for me!

Senior Times Features Folk Dancers

by Caroline Lanker

Senior Times magazine, published in Gainesville Florida, ran a nice story about folk dancing in Gainesville in their May 2011 issue. The cover picture is of Jack and Linda Seltzer, in folk costume, and there is a four-page article with more pictures inside. The story is about international folk dancing in general and the Gainesville club in particular and emphasizes what a good activity folk dancing is for seniors. Besides Jack and Linda, who are recently retired, the author also interviewed retirees June Littler and John Ward.

The article is upbeat and complimentary. Some quotes: "...the true spirit of folkdancing – fellowship"; "The atmosphere is welcoming and whimsical"; "... the group has a sizable repertoire to teach so participants always have something new to learn"; "The group has about 10-20 regular participants..."

Great publicity for folk dancing in Gainesville!

Tampa Trivia

by Terry Abrahams

It is hot! I'm not even walking the dogs until after dark, and it's still hot. But the few of us dancers that there are in Tampa are still dancing, and will probably continue through the summer. Andi is still in Canada, Ken (who dances mostly Israeli) is back at his summer camp, and our new gal is gone for August, so we're short in both international and Israeli, but the music plays and we dance on. Ernesto is feeling much better, dancing a little and looking good. Judith is running around to a variety of Scan camps, but checks in when she's home. Ursula is getting ready for awful dental work, and some looking at a new pain in her hip, and may be out for a while, but my button that says "I may be sitting, but I'm still dancing" applies to her and we're so glad she keeps coming. Bobbi Ward is also feeling better and dancing more at Israeli.

Ursula and I went to the Flagler Fling and had a wonderful, wonderful time. (See [Fun at Flagler Fling](#).) To all the hosts who cleared the floor, played the music, made the food, put us up, and smiled the whole time – thanks! Ursula and I babbled on both ways, and made the three hour drive seem much, much shorter. We're on for next year already. Ursula, Vicki and I made it down to the Summer Stomp in Sarasota. (See [Sarasota Grapeviners](#).)

David in the St. Pete Israeli group is in Hawaii, celebrating 25 years of marriage, so his group is down for awhile, but for such a good reason! I'm off to India on August 2, not sure I'm looking forward to the weather or the heard-of swarms of people, but I haven't had a bad trip yet, and Jodi is all excited. I'm trying to learn a few words of Hindi, but ugh! Well, this is short, but I like to read everyone else's articles, and hope you like hearing from us as well. Have a wonderful summer.

Events

August

August 5 Orlando Visits Melbourne

Place: Melbourne Village Community House

Time: 7 – 10 pm

See [South Brevard International Dancers](#).

August 14-20 Mainwoods Dance Camp Week 1

Teachers: Teme Kernerman, Israeli; Jaap Leegwater, Bulgarian; Ann Smith, Scottish

Place: Indian Acres, Fryeburg, Maine

Contact: 973-787-4614,

info@mainwoodsdancecamp.org

Information: www.mainwoodsdancecamp.org

August 21-27 Mainwoods Dance Camp Week 2

Teachers: Dale Hyde, Welsh; Sonia Dion and Cristian Florescu, Romanian; Sani Rifati - Romani

See Mainwoods Dance Camp Week 1, above

August - September

August 28 – September 3 Mainwoods Dance Camp Week 3

Teachers: Roo Lester, Scandinavian; Lee Otterholt, Balkan and Beyond; Hilde Otterholt, Hawaiian

See Mainwoods Dance Camp Week 1, above

September

September 2 – 5 Karmiel USA - Israeli Folk Dance Weekend

with Dany Benshalom and Ruthy Slann

Place: The Mountain Resort, Highlands, NC

Contact: 864-650-2009, kibbutz@slann.com

Information: www.wix.com/karmielusa/home

September 9-11 Mountain Playshop with Daniela Ivanova

Place: Black Mountain, North Carolina

Contact: info@mountainplayshop.org

Information: www.mountainplayshop.org

October

October 21 – 23 Sharpes Assembly English Country Dance

Caller David Millstone; band Full Circle

Place: Kenilworth Lodge, 1610 SE Lakeview Drive, Sebring, Florida

Contact: Catie Geist, 321-427-3587,

catiegeist@att.net

Information: dancefl.us/ecd/ecdspec.php

October 29 Fall Fling

Hosted by South Brevard International Dancers

Place: Melbourne Village Community House, Melbourne Village, FL

Time: 11:00 am – 10:00 pm

Pot luck lunch and supper

Price: \$5

Contact: John Daly, 321-482-6818,

john@dalypreservation.com

2012

February 17 – 20 FFDC President's Weekend

Place: Holiday Inn Main Gate East, 5711 W. Irlo Bronson Memorial Hwy (US192), Kissimmee, FL

Time: 4:00 pm Friday to noon Monday

Contact: Terry Abrahams, 813-234-1231,

tabrahams@tampabay.rr.com

Information: See [Prez Sez](#)

International Folk Dance Tours

Oct. 16 - 28 Jim Gold Greece Tour

Santorini extension: Oct. 27-30

Led by Jim Gold and Lee Otterholt

Contact for all Jim Gold tours: 201-836-0362,

jimgold@jimgold.com

Information: www.jimgold.com

2012

March 1 – 15 Dance on the Water Cruise/Tour - Thailand

with Mel Mann

7 day land tour, 7 day River Kwai cruise

Contact: 510-526-4033, meldancing@aol.com

Information: www.folkdanceonthewater.org

April 9 – 23 Jim Gold trip to Northern Greece

Led by Jim Gold and Lee Otterholt

4-day Greek Island Cruise Extension: April 23-27

4-night Rhodes Extension: April 25-29

Contact information with Greece Tour, above

Please note: The Florida FolkDancer prints information on folk dance tours, camps and other events that may be of interest to our readers. This does not imply an endorsement or recommendation of any tour or camp (except our own FFDC events!).

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FLORIDA FOLK DANCER

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FFDC Website: www.folkdance.org